

About the Forest Service Response to Comments Received On the Gallatin Forest Travel Plan Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Introduction

The Forest Service has prepared responses to comments received on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Gallatin Forest Travel Management Plan. Content analysis of the letters and emails received during the comment period resulted in approximately 2,600 substantive comments. These comments and responses are included in an “Excel” spreadsheet contained within this folder. The Forest Service chose to use a spreadsheet for responding to comments because it allows for the comments/responses to be sorted or subsets of the complete document to be extracted. Basic information on how to navigate with the spreadsheet is provided below. A (.pdf) file of the Response to Comments is also provided for those that prefer it.

Before discussing use of the spreadsheet, there are some key points about Forest Service responses that you should be aware of:

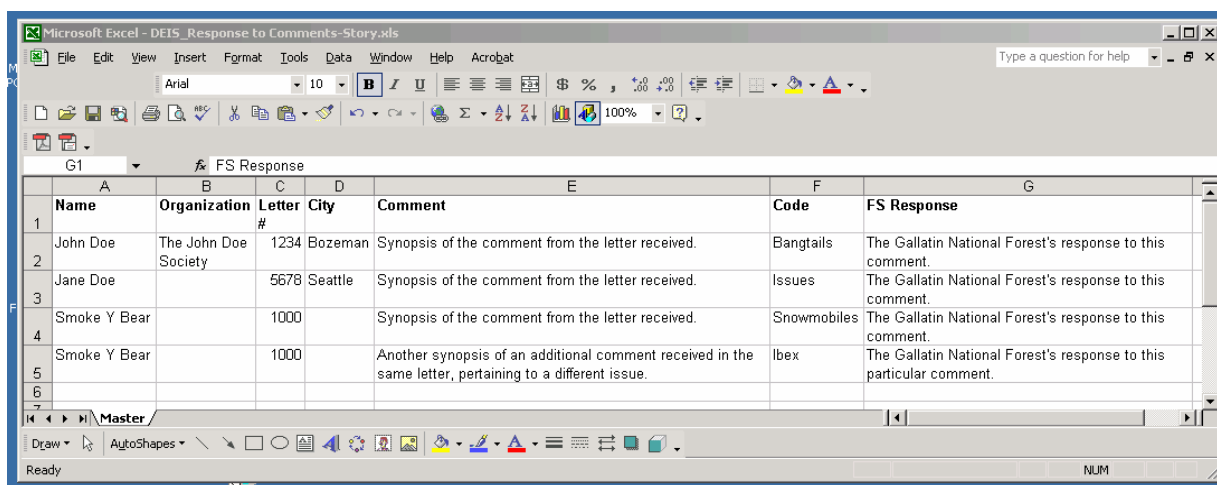
- Responses were written by Forest Service staff over the past several months; prior to the Forest Supervisor’s final decision. They are based on knowledge of the analysis that was done for the Final EIS and the agency’s preferred alternative as of January of 2006 (i.e. Alternative 7-M). In most cases the decision and Alternative 7-M are the same, but there are some differences. Readers should refer to the Record of Decision (ROD) for the rationale used for selecting the final Travel Management Plan. References made to the ROD in the Response to Comments are based on knowledge of what would be addressed in that document and not the specifics of the decision.
- You may notice that many responses are repetitive. This is because several respondents often provided similar comments. The response was repeated, rather than referenced, in anticipation that readers may want to sort or filter the comments to focus on specific subjects or just those provided by an individual commenter.
- A number of Forest Service employees were involved in preparing comment responses depending on the issue and/or geographic location referenced in the comments. Therefore you may notice different writing styles and/or approaches to the various responses.

Navigating Through the Response to Comments Spreadsheet

The Forest Service chose to use a spreadsheet for responding to comments because it allows for the comments/responses to be sorted or subsets of the complete document to be extracted. For example, the reader can manipulate the spreadsheet to focus on the comments submitted by a specific group or individual, or can organize the comments by topic.

Those familiar with Excel spreadsheets will likely be able to sort, filter, or otherwise display the information contained in the spreadsheet in a variety of different ways. For those who are not familiar with using spreadsheets the following provides some basic instructions.

1. Double click on the Excel document titled “Response to Comments” to open it. The excel spreadsheet should look similar to the example below. If you are on the Gallatin National Forest website you will want to download the spreadsheet to your hard drive such that you can manipulate it.

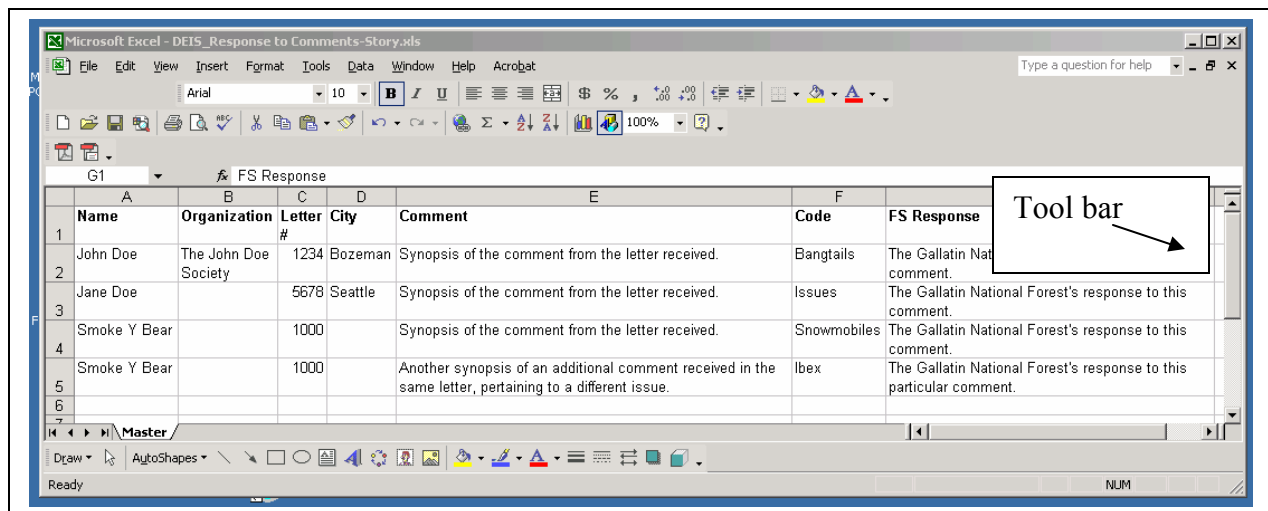


	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
	Name	Organization	Letter #	City	Comment	Code	FS Response
1	John Doe	The John Doe Society	1234	Bozeman	Synopsis of the comment from the letter received.	Bangtails	The Gallatin National Forest's response to this comment.
2	Jane Doe		5678	Seattle	Synopsis of the comment from the letter received.	Issues	The Gallatin National Forest's response to this comment.
3	Smoke Y Bear		1000		Synopsis of the comment from the letter received.	Snowmobiles	The Gallatin National Forest's response to this comment.
4	Smoke Y Bear		1000		Another synopsis of an additional comment received in the same letter, pertaining to a different issue.	Ibex	The Gallatin National Forest's response to this particular comment.
5							
6							

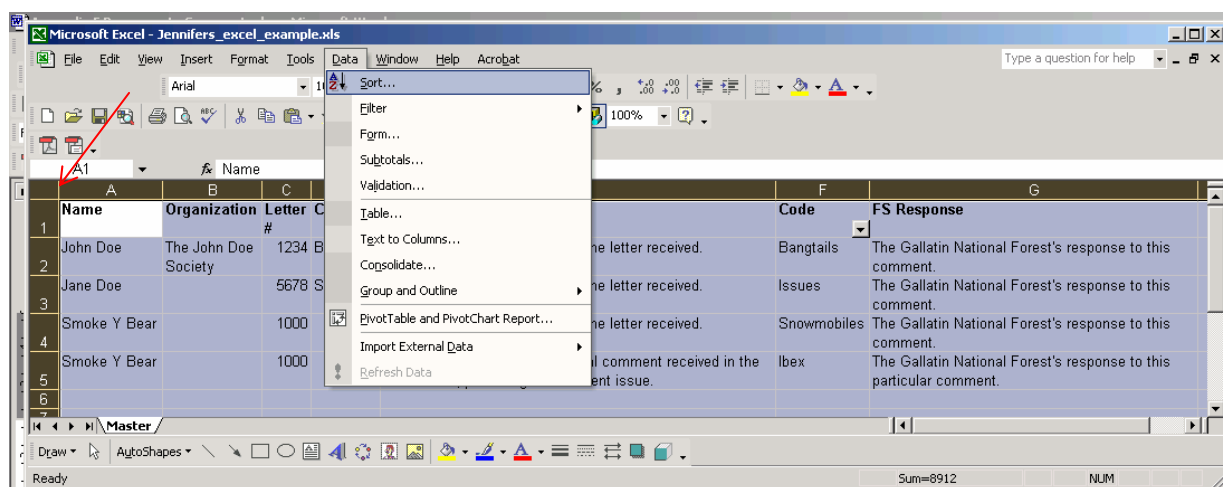
(Note: This is a sample document for example purposes. The column names found in row 1 should be identical to the document opened.)

Column A contains the name of the commentor. If an organization was provided it is listed in Column B. Column C contains the letter number that was assigned by the Forest Service. This number allows the agency to find the actual letter within the project file (note that the project file is located at the Gallatin Forest Supervisor’s Office). Column D identifies the city or state of residence if one was provided. Column E identifies the comment made. Column F contains a code assigned by the Forest Service that grouped comments by subject matter or travel planning area. Column G contains the Forest Service response to the comment. Note that all comments extracted from a comment letter will not automatically be grouped together in the spreadsheet.

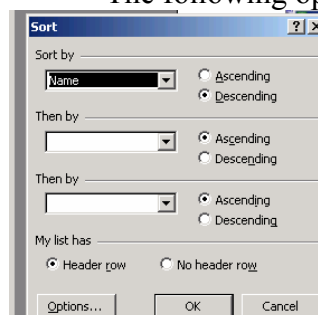
2. Due to the number of letters received and the various comments within each letter (approximately 2,600) the Excel spreadsheet is quite large. To read every comment and every response use the tool bar on the right to scroll through the spreadsheet. (Example next page). If a response appears to be cut off at the end due to the amount of text, click on that cell and the remainder of the response should appear.



- To sort the comments and responses, click on the box above Row 1 and before Column A (red arrow) (this will highlight the whole spreadsheet). Then click on data, sort.

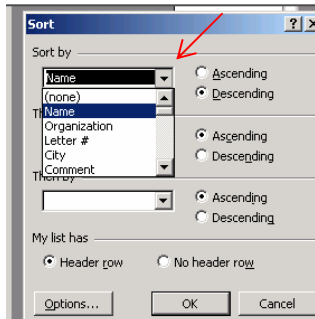


The following option should appear:

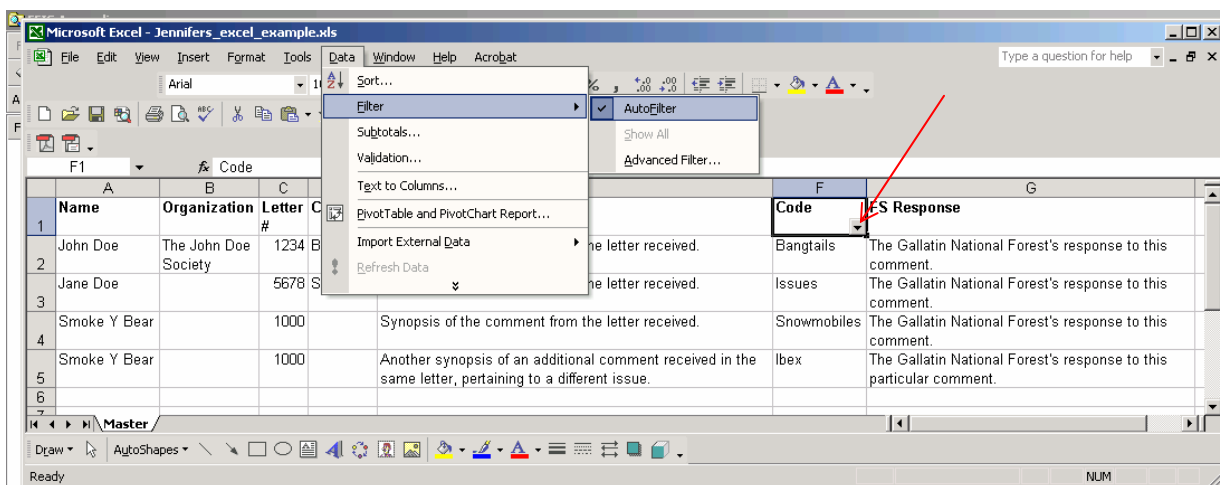


Click on the down arrow box (red arrow) and the column names will appear. Select the column you would like to sort by. (For example, you can sort by commentor's name if you would like to find the responses to your comments, or by code if you would like to review all the responses pertaining to a certain subject). You can then choose to display them ascending (A-Z) or descending (Z-A).

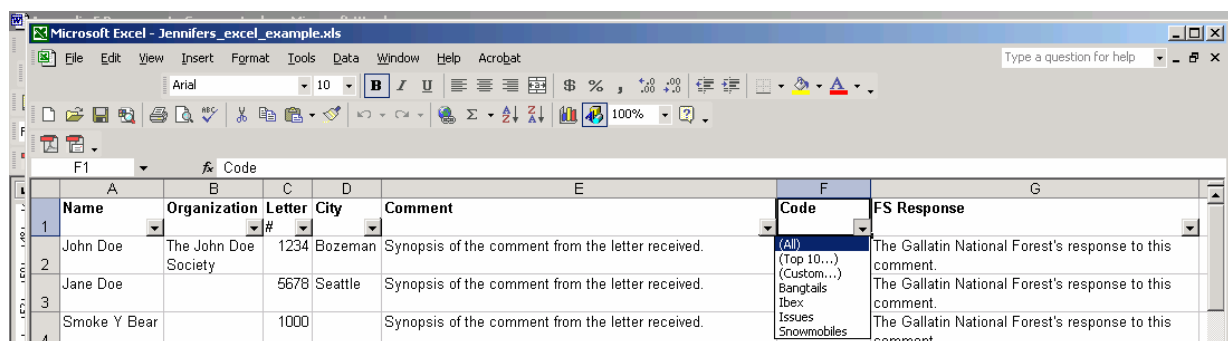
(Click in the radio button before the word “Ascending” or “Descending” to select it. (In this example “Descending” is selected.) Several columns can be sorted at a time. For instance, you can first sort by “Code” (Ascending), and then by “Name” (Ascending). The document will then be alphabetical by the code, and within each code the commentor’s names will be alphabetical.



To filter the document, click on the column you would like to filter. Then click on data, filter, and auto filter. You will then get a down arrow box located on the bottom right of the column header located in Row 1 (red arrow).



After clicking on the down arrow box, you will get a selection of the different options.



Once you select the option you want, it will only bring up the rows that contain that selection. To return to the rest of the document, click on the down arrow box again and select “All”.